2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma(Chinese)AP1
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163 miles long, has been made; there are 1300 miles of telegraph lines; stately law courts and other public buildings have sprung up, and so far from the work being a tax on the Indian Imperial Treasury, British Burma has been, after its first few years, more than self-supporting. For a considerable time it has contributed to the Imperial Treasury a clear surplus of a million sterling. The mere figures are in themselves surprising, but they cannot be truly appreciated unless they are read alongside the obvious, undeniable, and acknowledged prosperity and contentment of the native population. Since the annexation of Upper Burma these figures have been roughly multiplied by ten, and there is a steady yearly increase which would be greater if Burma were allowed to make use of her yearly surpluses.

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As long as there was a king of Burma, Mandalay was a larger town than Rangoon and an infinitely more picturesque one. It still remains by a long way the second town in Burma, but Rangoon has over-passed it in population. While Rangoon has gained, Mandalay has lost, but there seems no reason why it should go on declining.

The mushroom growth of Mandalay was entirely due to an autocratic order, but the number of ancient capitals in the neighbourhood shows that the position is an advantageous one. The astrologers and the king settled the new site between them, and when this was arranged a royal order came out bidding all remove themselves from Amarapura to Mandalay on pain of death in case of refusal. The transference of a bamboo hut is certainly no very great undertaking, and occupies less than a week in the pulling down and setting up. But the hardship was none the less where the people had gardens, or fruit-trees growing in their yards. The Chinese alone remained firm. Their houses were of the usual substantial, heavy, Celestial architecture, and, moreover, they had built for themselves an elaborate joss-house, in splendour quite equal to the best in Rangoon. Consequently, they flatly refused to migrate the two or three miles distance to the new capital. The astrologers were as usual for using force, but Mindôn Min had more sense. The Chinamen were almost all British subjects, and moreover their dealings contributed substantially to the revenue. Their

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16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
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647 643 The breadth of view, the knowledge of other countries, of other thoughts, that comes to those who have wealth and leisure, were wanting to these ministers of the king. Natural capacity many of them had, but that is not of much value until it is cultivated. You cannot learn in the narrow precincts of a village the knowledge necessary to the management of great affairs; and therefore in affairs of state this want of any noble or leisured class was a very serious loss to the government of Burma. It had great and counterbalancing advantages, of which I will speak when I come to local government, but that it was a heavy loss as far as the central government goes no one can doubt. There was none of that check upon the power of the king which a powerful nobility will give; there was no trained talent at his disposal. The king remained absolutely supreme, with no one near his throne, and the ministers were mere puppets, here to-day and gone to-morrow. They lived by the breath of the king and court, and when they lost favour there was none to help them. They had no faction behind them to uphold them against the king. It can easily be understood how disastrous all this was to any form of good government. All these ministers and governors were corrupt; there was corruption to the core.

647 652 When it is understood that hardly any official was paid, and that those who were paid were insufficiently paid, and had unlimited power, there will be no difficulty in seeing the reason. In circumstances like this all people would be corrupt. The only securities against bribery and abuse of power are adequate pay, restricted authority, and great publicity. None

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of these obtained in Burma any more than in the Europe of five hundred years ago, and the result was the same in both. The central government consisted of the king, who had no limit at all to his power, and the council of ministers, whose only check was the king. The executive and judicial were all the same: there was no appeal from one to the other. The only appeal from the ministers was to the king, and as the king shut himself up in his palace, and was practically inaccessible to all but high officials, the worthlessness of this appeal is evident. Outside Mandalay the country was governed by *wuns* or governors. These were appointed by the king, or by the council, or by both, and they obtained their position by bribery. Their tenure was exceedingly insecure, as any man who came and gave a bigger bribe was likely to obtain the former governor's dismissal and his own appointment. Consequently the usual tenure of office of a governor was a year. Often there were half a dozen governors in a year; sometimes a man with strong influence managed to retain his position for some years. From the orders of the governor there was an appeal to the council. This was in some matters useful, but in others not so. If a governor sentenced a man to death—all governors had power of life and death—he would be executed long before an appeal could reach the council. Practically no check was possible by the palace over distant governors, and they did as they liked. Anything more disastrous and fatal to any kind of good government than this it is impossible to imagine. The governors did what they considered right in